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Forestry Canada - Maritimes Region

TECHNICAL NOTE

HIGHLIGHTS OF FOREST PEST CONDITIONS IN THE MARITIMES IN MID-JUNE 1991

This is the first of a series of periodic reports in which we will highlight major forest pest conditions in the Maritimes in 1991. In this report the period up to mid-June 1991 is covered; updates will be provided as conditions develop.

An apology to the New Brunswick Department of Natural Resources and Energy for omitting to mention of their contribution to the information on hemlock looper in the 1990 FIDS Annual Report (Forest pest conditions in the Maritimes in 1990. M-X-178, pages 9-11). Even though we stated in the acknowledgements that part of the information was contributed by another agency, we neglected to identify DNRE as the source. We apologize for the oversight and hope that the omission did not cause embarrassment (other than to us).

Announcement - We are happy to announce the addition of some new members to FIDS, as a result of project restructuring. We welcome the addition of Dennis Doucette, Don Marks, Sandra McInnis and Thaddee Renault to the unit with their wealth of experience for our and your benefit.

Frost was widespread for a few nights in mid to late May in many parts of New Brunswick and inland areas of western Nova Scotia. The resulting foliage damage was the most conspicuous mid-spring problem. Beech and red oak were the most commonly damaged species, often with severe damage of partially flushed leaves and current shoots. Other affected hardwood species included ash, red maple, birch, elm, black walnut, and silver maple, both in ornamental and in forest settings. Shoot damage on balsam fir Christmas trees has also been observed at scattered locations in both provinces.

NURSERIES ☐

PLANTATIONS ☐

SILVICULTURE ☐

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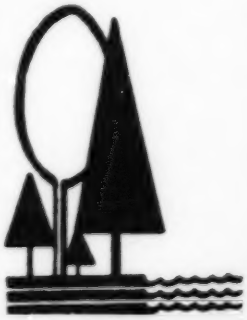
INSECTS AND DISEASES ■



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Gypsy moth larvae have been found at Oak Hill, St. Stephen, and Ledge Road, Charlotte Co., New Brunswick, with no noticeable defoliation. Trace defoliation has been found on elm and sugar maple at New Minas, Kings Co., Nova Scotia.

Foliage browning and needle loss of balsam fir occurred over a large area in Lunenburg, Queens, and Annapolis counties in Nova Scotia at the end of May. Most needles on the affected trees dropped, leaving the trees with only the newly developing current shoots. Needles often, but not always, turned brown before shedding. Trees of various sizes in both Christmas tree management areas and wild stands were affected. The severity of the condition at any given location was variable, some trees almost completely bare while others were almost untouched by shedding. The cause of the physiological stress is unknown but is probably a combination of the 1990 summer drought, winter drying, the mid-May 1991 frost and site conditions. The damage, resulting in unmarketable Christmas trees, has been estimated to be many thousands of dollars. Similar conditions, although less severe in intensity, have also occurred in New Brunswick. Insects (mites) and diseases (needle cast) observed in some of the samples are considered incidental.

Forest tent caterpillar caused moderate and severe defoliation of trembling aspen at a number of widely separated locations in central Sunbury and Queens counties in New Brunswick. After years of very low populations, since the collapse of the last outbreak in the mid-1980s, we may be experiencing the beginning of a new upward cycle.

Eastern tent caterpillar nests, on cherry and apple, appear to be less common than last year in the southern half of New Brunswick, although the distribution of the insect appears to have moved northward and more than the usual number of nests were observed in the Fredericton area. Very few nests can be found in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.

Larch casebearer populations increased sharply from 1990 and were found in many areas of southern New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. The intensity of foliage discoloration was highly variable, both from tree to tree and from one patch of trees to another. Patches of moderate and light discoloration were also observed on Prince Edward Island, but the insect is less common than in the mainland provinces.

Fall cankerworm and winter moth has caused more pronounced defoliation od elm, maples, ash, and oak in towns such as Truro, New Minas, Kentville, and Bridgetown, Nova Scotia, than in the previous year.

Needle rust was severe on jack pine in a number of plantations in Charlotte County, N.B., infecting most of the one-year-old foliage on the affected trees. These needles will probably fall before the end of the summer.

J. Edward Hurley and L.P. Magasi
Forest Insect and Disease Survey

June 17, 1991

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